Thrift Mart bought by east Texas chain

The 16-store Thrift Mart Food Stores chain has been purchased by Brookshires Crocery Co. of Tyler. Thrift Mart has operated a store in Willow Park since 1986.

A spokesperson said the Willow Park store will continue to operate under the Thrift Mart name. The store will close at 6 p.m., October 16 and reopen "a couple of days" later under Brookshires' management, she said.

The Thrift Mart chain is owned by the Clyde Williams family. Clyde Williams, Sr., and his wife Nona purchased a store in Roaring Springs in 1950 along with her parents, Homer and Eva Kingery. After selling that store in 1965, they moved to Comanche and purchased a small grocery store. It became Thrift Mart in 1974 when Bill Williams joined his father in the company and a store in Eastland was added.

During the 1970s and '80s, stores were added in Willow Park, Albany, Cisco, Clifton, Fort Worth, Gatesville, Granbury and Hurst. Stores were added in Robinson, Bellmead, Hillsboro, Van, Forney and Malakoff in the '90s.

Bill Williams, who has served as general manager for the chain, said his family is leaving the grocery business. "The circumstances are right for a change," he said. "Brookshires is a good, qualified buyer and Clyde is ready to retire after 45 years in the grocery business. We are fortunate to sell to a company that focuses on the needs of customers and employees. Brookshires' business philosophy is very similar to ours in that they concentrate on quality products and service. The company is involved in manufacturing, wholesaling and retailing, the necessary facets to remain healthy in the business climate today."

Brookshires owns and operates more than 100 stores in east Texas, Louisiana and Arkansas.

Williams said that nearly all of Thrift Mart's hourly employees and store managers and some higher-level supervisors will remain as Brookshire employees. Eddie Sullivan is manager of the Willow Park store.

Williams expressed pride in Thrift Mart employees, saying they have "unselfishly served and given top priority to customers. Many thankks to our customers for their loyalty over the 45 years we have been in business. Brookshires has 68 years of experience in the grocery business and they will continue to offer excellent service and competitive prices."

Democrat photo by Bill Hodgson

CLEAN-UP - City of Weatherford employees Dwayne Shields and Kelly Lockett assist with Saturday's countywide clean-up by operating a chipping machine. Shields said they were very busy Saturday morning, processing more than 30 loads of branches and limbs.

Crime of the Week

From Parker County Crime Commission and Parker County Crime Stoppers

Sheriff Ben Whiteman Jr. has released the following "Crimes of the Week." Help is needed in solving these crimes.

On Thursday, Sept. 28, Hal

Sept. 25, the unknown suspects took a 1993 Pontiac GrandAm from a home located on FM 51 North and damaged the undercarriage of the vehicle, resulting in